The respondent's own background and subjective evaluations of home and neighborhood also have a substantial impact on who moves and who stays. The information in Table 3 shows that people who don't like their homes, their neighborhood, or their neighbors are (not surprisingly!) much more apt to have moved than those who are positive about their situation. In terms of background factors, we see that in spite of the high cost of moving, the poorest and least educated segment of our sample were the most likely to have moved in this period. This is probably due to an association of low income and education with many of the other factors we have covered: renting rather than owning a home, less satisfaction with one's home, less well-kept neighborhoods. Families with children are, as expected, the most stable part of the community, followed by married couples without children. Unmarried people and people who live alone, or with non-relatives are the most apt to move.

Destination of Movers

Data in Table 3 indicate that individuals from small towns, who have weak ties to their communities, dislike their neighbors and their neighborhood, are not economically well off and are unmarried or childless are more likely to migrate. As these types of people move, what is the destination of their migration? Do they move across town, to Omaha, or even to California? Table 4 presents the destinations of movers by those characteristics found earlier to be associated with moving.

TABLE 4. DESTINATION OF PEOPLE MOVING BETWEEN 1977 and 1979, BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, CONTROLLING FOR AGE OF RESPONDENT.

| | Another House, Same County | Another County In Nebraska | Another State | Number |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL | 59% | 16% | 25% | 437 |
| COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS, 1977 | | | | |
| Kind of Community: | | | | |
| Rural farm | 53 | 29 | 18 | 42 |
| Rural nonfarm | 56 | 26 | 18 | 83 |
| City less than 50,000 | 56 | 17 | 27 | 158 |
| Lincoln | 61 | 9 | 30 | 50 |
| Omaha | 68 | 11 | 21 | 106 |
| Condition of Neighborhood: | | | | |
| Very well kept up | 56 | 16 | 28 | 194 |
| Fairly well kept up | 61 | 19 | 19 | 191 |
| Not well kept up | 56 | 15 | 29 | 34 |
| RESPONDENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY, 1977 | | | | |
| Length of Residence in Community: | | | | |
| 0-5 years | 42 | 22 | 36 | 154 |
| 6-15 years | 65 | 12 | 23 | 72 |
| 16 + years | 70 | 17 | 13 | 209 |
| Number of Friends and Relatives in Community: | | | | |
| 0 | 53 | 13 | 34 | 54 |
| 1-3 | 52 | 22 | 26 | 97 |
| 4-6 | 55 | 16 | 29 | 105 |
| 7 or more | 68 | 16 | 16 | 179 |
| Home Ownership: | | | | |
| Own or buying | 57 | 19 | 24 | 225 |
| Rent | 64 | 14 | 22 | 205 |

TABLE 4. DESTINATION OF PEOPLE MOVING BETWEEN 1977 and 1979, BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS CONTROLLING FOR AGE OF RESPONDENT. (continued)

| | Another House, Same County | Another County In Nebraska | Another State | Number |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENT | | | | |
| Liking of Neighborhood: | | | | |
| Very much | 61 | 17 | 22 | 251 |
| Somewhat | 57 | 17 | 26 | 138 |
| Not much | 70 | 6 | 24 | 42 |
| Evaluation of Neighbors: | | | | |
| Very good | 56 | 17 | 26 | 192 |
| Fairly good | 64 | 15 | 21 | 156 |
| Not good | 65 | 15 | 19 | 61 |
| Satisfaction with Home: | | | | |
| Very satisfied | 64 | 12 | 24 | 181 |
| Satisfied | 62 | 16 | 22 | 190 |
| Not satisfied | 48 | 28 | 24 | 63 |
| Family Income: | | | | |
| Less than $10,000 | 45 | 30 | 25 | 167 |
| $10,000-$19,999 | 57 | 28 | 14 | 148 |
| $20,000 or more | 44 | 33 | 22 | 62 |
| Respondent's Education: | | | | |
| 0-11 years | 60 | 18 | 22 | 121 |
| 12 years | 59 | 18 | 23 | 138 |
| 13-15 years | 61 | 18 | 21 | 103 |
| 16 + years | 50 | 16 | 34 | 73 |
| Family Type: | | | | |
| Husband-wife, kids | 53 | 12 | 35 | 123 |
| Husband-wife only | 59 | 24 | 18 | 132 |
| Other | 60 | 18 | 22 | 178 |

Nearly 60 percent of our sample made very conservative moves, merely changing residences within the same county. While this could mean a move of a few blocks or one of 50 miles, it is likely to mean little disruption in employment or networks of friends and relatives. The data here suggest that once determined to uproot these ties, more people left the state entirely than who moved to a different county in Nebraska. This same pattern, though less obvious, is present in the national data in Table 1.

In general the background characteristics that predicted moving verses staying are not so effective in predicting destination of the move. Urban residents turn out to be the most conservative movers and rural people the least. On the other hand, once having left their original county, rural movers are more likely to stay within the state than are the more adventurous urban dwellers. Lincoln has an exceptional level of out-of-state migration, probably a result of the high proportion of college-educated professionals employed there. In general, few people move from Lincoln or Omaha to other locations in Nebraska. When people in these large cities move beyond their county line, 3 out of 4 leave the state entirely.

Length of residence and number of friends and relatives in the community are strongly associated with the more conservative type of move. Not only are long-term residents and people with large networks least apt to change residences, they are also more likely, if they do move, to stay within the same community. Conversely, newcomers to the community are much more apt to leave the state if they do decide to move. Home ownership, on the other hand, seems to have relatively little impact on where people decide to move.

In terms of characteristics of respondents, these factors again have less impact on destination of move than on the decision to move. The impact of dissatisfaction with home and neighborhood is particularly unclear: those who dislike their neighborhoods are most likely to stay in their own county, but those who dislike their home are the least likely to stay! None of these characteristics seems to differentiate between out-of-state and in-state migrants. While income also has an uncertain effect on destination, respondent's education has a clear impact: college graduates are significantly more likely than any other educational category to leave the state.

Likewise, married couples with children are significantly more apt to leave the state than other kinds of family types. As noted earlier, these people are among the least likely to move in the first place and are perhaps, like homeowners, less likely to uproot themselves and their children to get another bedroom or a bigger yard. Once they decide to move, however, they are more likely to move out-of-state, most often as a result of job transfer and improved occupational opportunities.

People Who Left the State

This analysis suggests that local movers cannot be distinguished from long-distance movers as easily as the general category of movers can be distinguished from the stayers. Nevertheless it is clear that those most apt to leave the state are college graduates, from big cities, married with children, and poorly integrated into their communities. In fact, a large number of these people are just moving on rather than

uprooting themselves: 58 percent of those leaving the state had lived in their community less than five years and many were just making a short, and temporary, stay in Nebraska. Consequently, few intend to return: only 6 percent said they would definitely come back while 60 percent said it was unlikely or absolutely certain that they would never return to Nebraska.

Rural-Urban Migration

Much has been made in recent years of the so-called rural renaissance--that large proportions of the population prefer small-town living and that rural areas are growing faster than urban. The evidence for this trend is decidedly mixed. While many people do say they prefer small-town living, there is no convincing demonstration of an exodus to small towns--especially in Nebraska.

TABLE 5. GROWTH OF METROPOLITAN AND NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTIES IN NEBRASKA, 1960-69 AND 1970-77.*

| | 1960-69 | 1970-77 |
|---|---|---|
| TOTAL | 5.1% | 4.7% |
| Metropolitan counties | 17.4 | 8.8 |
| Non-metropolitan counties | -2.4 | 1.6 |

*U.S. Statistical Abstract, 1979, Table 12, "Components of Population Change--States, 1960-70, 1970-77." GPO:WDC.

What the data show in Nebraska is most accurately described as the end of an 80-year drain from rural counties. The most recent census data show that Nebraska's "metropolitan" counties (Dakota, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy) are still growing much more rapidly than non-metropolitan counties, but that the gap is narrowing. For the first time in decades, nonmetropolitan Nebraska is experiencing slight growth. While these data in Table 5 hardly herald a renaissance, they may signal a stabilization.

Data from this survey show no tendency for a return to the countryside. Using more sensitive measures of community size than the metro/nonmetro county distinction, Nebraska data show that few respondents who moved to a different county between 1977 and 1979 also moved to a smaller community. In fact, both in-state and out-of-state migrants were more than twice as likely to move to a larger than a smaller community (see Table 6). People who moved within their own county generally stayed in the same community (90 percent), with the balance distributed among those moving to larger and smaller communities.

TABLE 6. DISTRIBUTION OF DESTINATION BY SIZE OF PLACE OF ORIGIN, ALL OUT-OF-COUNTY MOVERS, 1977-79.

| Size Of Place, 1977 | Size Of Place, 1979 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural | City Less Than 50,000 | 50,000 - 300,000 | Larger Than 300,000 | |
| Rural | 23 | 10 | 5 | 11 | |
| City Less Than 50,000 | 15 | 15 | 4 | 38 | 45% Larger |
| 50,000 - 300,000 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 13 | |
| Larger Than 300,000 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 20 | 33% No Change |
| | 22% Smaller | | | | |

## Conclusion

Migration continues to be a potent force in shaping Nebraska's communities. The rural-to-urban migration pattern of the last century continues to operate within the state, though to a lesser degree than earlier. There is no evidence here of any return to the countryside or small-town living, rather the opposite trend is apparent in these data.

It is important to note that the data do not cover newcomers to the state during this period. However, if few people from Lincoln or Omaha moved out to Sidney or Hastings, there is less reason to expect people from Denver or Topeka to move to small-town Nebraska. All of the current data on migration in Nebraska suggest slow growth in the state as a whole

with a stabilization of out-migration rates from rural areas and small communities and continued growth of the 4 or 5 larger cities in the state.

List of reports already released using data gathered in the 1980 Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey. These may be purchased at the indicated price from the Bureau of Sociological Research of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

| Report Number | Title |
|---|---|
| 1. | Designs, Procedures, Instruments and Forms for the 1980 NASIS. Lynn K. White. Price: $7.50. |
| 2. | Status of Women in Nebraska. Susan Welch and Alan Booth. Price: $1.00. |
| 3. | Congressional District and Planning Region Databook for the State of Nebraska. Lynn K. White. Price: $1.50. |
| 4. | Nebraskans and Their Local Government. Susan Welch and Alan Booth. Price: $.75. |

U7870-1.17
1/20/81

# NASIS

NEBRASKANS AND THEIR UNIVERSITY

UNL

**NEBRASKA ANNUAL SOCIAL INDICATORS SURVEY**

Bureau of Sociological Research
Department of Sociology
University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Lincoln, Nebraska 68588
Telephone: (402) 472-3672

NASIS-80 #6

# NEBRASKANS AND THEIR UNIVERSITY

David Brinkerhoff
Department of Sociology

and

Alan Booth
Department of Sociology

Price: .75

# The Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey

Lynn K. White - 1980 Study Director

The findings in this report are based on data collected in the fourth Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey (NASIS). This survey is part of an on-going study of the quality of life in Nebraska conducted by the Bureau of Sociological Research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The sample for NASIS consists of 1916 respondents eighteen years of age or older residing in households in Nebraska. The sample is selected through a process called random digit dialing: within each three-digit prefix in the state, four-digit numbers are selected randomly from all possible four-digit numbers to complete the telephone number. Respondents are further chosen randomly from the adults in the household and interviewed by telephone by experienced, professional interviewers from the offices of the Bureau of Sociological Research. All interviewing was done between February and April of 1980. This procedure produces a high-quality, representative sample of Nebraska adults. Analysis shows the sample to be representative of the state on age, sex, and geographical distribution.

The interview averaged approximately 45 minutes and included questions about environment, health, crime, political attitudes, occupation, education, family life, and other matters reflecting the quality of life experienced in the state. For the entire sample, the chances are 95 in 100 that the true value for the population lies within a range equal to the reported survey percentage plus or minus 2.3 percent. This is an estimate of maximum error and for most items the percentages are likely to be even more accurate.

The data gathered by NASIS are used by a wide variety of State and local government agencies for policy and program planning and by faculty and students at the University of Nebraska and other colleges for research. No information identifying any respondent is released to any user and the strict confidentiality of individual respondents is rigidly enforced. While the final responsibility for the organization and structure of the survey and for reports produced under its name rests with the Bureau of Sociological Research, public agencies and University departments play an integral part in planning the survey through an Advisory Committee. Public organizations interested in membership on the Advisory Committee should contact the NASIS Study Director.

Funding for NASIS comes from the University of Nebraska, the Bureau of Sociological Research and State and local agencies which buy items and data analysis from the survey.

The NASIS surveys are repeated each year to measure changes in the quality of life in Nebraska. While there is a core of questions which is included every year, each survey has a large component of unique items which address specific topical issues. Plans for future years include reinterviewing the 1977 panel every two years to assess changes in their lives. Additional detail on the NASIS surveys regarding use of the survey data or cost of purchasing items on future surveys can be obtained by contacting the NASIS Study Director at the Bureau of Sociological Research or by sending for a copy of the 1981 NASIS Prospectus.